

THE COST OF UNADDRESSED HEARING LOSS

By Kristin Johnston & Carli Van Harken
 Owners of Comprehensive Ear & Hearing

How is your hearing? If you think it's just fine, don't be so sure. A recent survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that **one in four U.S. adults who report their hearing as good or excellent actually have some hearing loss.**

The study also indicated that our society is getting noisier. An increasing number of people who are experiencing noise-related hearing loss report no exposure to loud noises as part of their job.

This noise-related damage was seen as early as age 20. According to the CDC, about 40 million Americans ages 20 to 69 have hearing loss in one or both ears that may be due to noise exposure.

"Older people are more likely to have hearing loss, but this study finds some young adults are already losing some hearing, so this is a concern for all age groups," CDC Acting Director Dr. Anne Schuchat said.

That is not good news for employers looking to get the most out of their employees. **Good communication is key to the success of businesses and individuals, especially in our increasingly service and knowledge-based economy.**

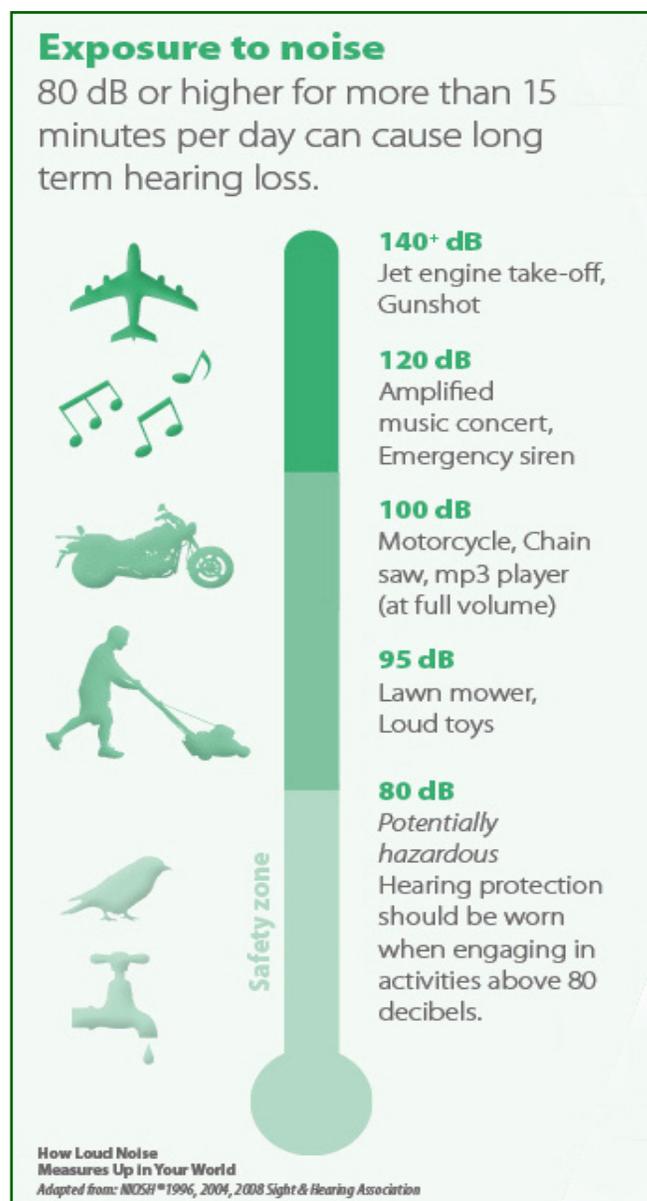
According to the Better Hearing Institute, **unaddressed hearing loss can affect productivity, job performance and earnings. It can increase sick leave, lead to fatigue and distress and affect interpersonal interactions. It can also impact safety** by limiting a person's ability to hear warnings and signals that indicate danger.

To help reduce the risk of early hearing loss, the CDC encourages doctors to ask their patients about hearing and noise exposure. **Employers can do their part by integrating education about the importance of hearing care into existing wellness efforts, including newsletters or health fairs.**

Content for education is available free from Comprehensive Ear & Hearing, and our professionals are available to visit worksites to give presentations. We also provide complimentary screenings for hearing loss.

Employers can also offer hearing health benefits. While medical insurance plans do not typically cover hearing aids, **Comprehensive Ear & Hearing offers a benefit plan that can supplement traditional insurance at no charge to employers.**

The Comprehensive Ear & Hearing Benefits Plan provides access to free testing, discounts on the purchase of hearing aids and other benefits. Also, hearing aids are eligible expenses for health savings accounts (HSAs) and flexible savings accounts (FSAs).



Employees and Family Members Receive

- FREE hearing screens
- FREE hearing instrument demonstrations and trial use
- \$500 OFF a pair of digital hearing instruments
- FREE clean & checks on current hearing instruments
- 20% OFF hearing instrument accessories or assistive listening devices.
- 20% OFF custom hearing protection (music, shooters, occupational, swim plugs)
- 0% financing options available

Discounts cannot be combined with other offers.

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Comprehensive Services with a Caring Touch!

Hearing Benefits Card

The Comprehensive Ear & Hearing Benefits Plan is available to all members of the Chamber of Commerce in Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa Counties. If you'd like more information on the Comprehensive Ear & Hearing Business Benefits Program or to receive benefits cards for your employees, call Deb Broemer at 616.847.3144.

ONE IN THREE AMERICANS
IN THE WORK FORCE
 HAS UNTREATED HEARING LOSS...

More than **10 percent** of full time employees have a **diagnosed hearing problem** and another **30 percent suspect they have a problem** but have not sought treatment.

Of those with suspected hearing loss, nearly all report that this hearing loss impacts them on the job, with complaints ranging from misunderstanding what is being said to pretending to hear when they cannot and having trouble on the phone.

Hearing is an important part of everyday lives -- keeping us informed, safe and connected. Good communication is critical to business success for both employer and employee.

...WITH NUMEROUS
NEGATIVE
 EFFECTS

Many people put off getting help for their hearing loss because they think it's insignificant — something they can deal with by simply turning the TV louder or asking friends to repeat themselves. But research has linked untreated hearing loss to significant issues such as:

- Irritability, negativism and anger
- Fatigue, tension, stress and depression
- Avoidance or withdrawal from social situations
- Social rejection and loneliness
- Reduced alertness and increased risk to personal safety
- Impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks
- Reduced job performance and earning power
- Diminished psychological and overall health

betterhearing.org

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Did you know? Hearing Aids can . . .

sync with

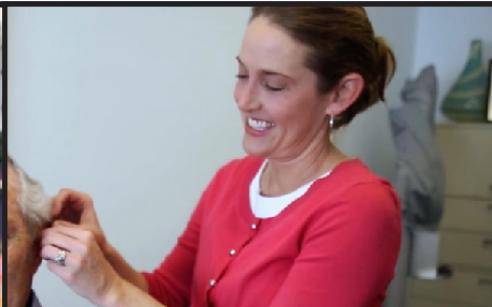


reduce
 the effects of Alzheimer's
 and dementia.

Better Hearing Institute
 Johns Hopkins University



Kristin Johnston, BA, BC-HIS, Owner



Carli Van Harken, HIS, Owner



Cari Marzolf, MA, CCC-A, Audiologist

- Audiological testing • Hearing instruments • Custom sound & swim plugs
- Free hearing instrument trials • Free consultations
- Repairs and maintenance on all makes of hearing instruments
- Medical ear & hearing care and wax removal by ENT
- Medicare and most insurance accepted • Medical flexible spending account eligible

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
 After hours appointments available by request.

Professional Services with a Caring Touch!